Supply of PDS Kerosene to Fishing Activity

3009. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to stop dispensing PDS kerosene to fishing activity;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether views of the fishing community would be ascertained before implementing the policy; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) The Government of India allocates Kerosene to the States/Union Territories (UTs) under the Public Distribution System (PDS) for the purpose of cooking and illumination only. There is no separate allocation for the fisheries sector to any State/UT. Further distribution within the State/UT is handled by the concerned State Government/UT Administration.

With a view to assessing the genuine demand requirement of kerosene in different State/UTs, in December 2004 the Government commissioned the first-ever comprehensive study of the subject through the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), NCAER have submitted their report in October, 2005. In their report, NCAER have noted that PDS kerosene is supplied for fishing in some coastal States and have *inter alia* recommended that the kerosene requirement for fishing may be supplied at non-PDS prices. The recommendations of the NCAER have been brought to the notice of State Governments.

3010. *Cancelled*

Frauds in ITDC

†3011. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the serving and ex-officers of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) have committed fraud amounting to lakhs of rupees during the last one year;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the steps taken by Government to recover the said amount from the officers involved; and

(d) the steps taken to make the system fool-proof so that the officers do not get involved in such unfair activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No case of fraud amounting to lakhs of rupees during the last one year (since December, 2004) by the serving/ex-officers of the Corporation has come to the notice of ITDC management.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Agreements on Development of Tourism

3012. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed any agreement with foreign countries under the open sky policy in tourism sector;

(b) if so, the number of foreign tourists esitmated in the coming years under this agreement;

(c) the number of tourists arrived in the country during the last year; and

(d) whether any scheme is being formulated for providing facilities to the tourists and also development of tourist spots in the country to make India a leading tourist destination in the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) While Government has gradually liberalized the traffic entitlements on foreign routes, no 'open sky' policy as such has been adopted.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The total number of foreign tourist arrivals to India in the year 2004 were 33,67,980.